

## Readability

Please provide the reading level for the consent form. Generally, CDC IRBs request that consent forms be written at approximately the 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level (the reading level of the “average” American). However, if investigators believe that the reading level of the proposed study population is higher or lower, exceptions to this general rule will be considered by the IRB upon submission of an appropriate justification.

Please see the guide, *Consent for CDC Research, A Reference for Developing Consent Forms and Oral Scripts*, which was developed to assist investigators in developing consent forms that are easily understood by the majority of participants in CDC research activities. The *Guide* can be accessed through the CDC Associate Director for Science’s homepage at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/ads/hsrconsent.pdf>. Also available is a document that provides instructions for utilizing the “SMOG” formula at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/ads/smog.htm> and the Fry Graph Reading Level Index at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/ads/fry.htm>. In addition, the “Grammatik” feature of WordPerfect and the “Spelling & Grammar” feature of Microsoft Word will analyze the readability of documents. Another document that could assist in lowering sentence complexity is the Glossary of Lay Terms available at <http://ovcr.ucdavis.edu/hsglossary.htm>.

\_\_\_\_ If the reading level is higher than 8<sup>th</sup> grade, please either lower the reading level of the consent form to approximately the 8<sup>th</sup> grade or provide a justification for using a consent form written at a higher level.